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Assassin

Lawrence F. Specker

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Assassin

**First Place Poetry
High School Competition
Lawrence F. Specker**

The signs say nothing.
The instinct says "Wait," so
the snake waits by the water.
Not as a man would wait,
with his body, or
as an Indian would wait,
with his spirit, but
as the rocks wait,
mindless, spiritless,
a stick lying in the sand.

The stick lies in heat, heat
no man could endure,
in dryness

no Indian could bear.
Silently,
for sticks are silent.
Motionless,
for sticks do not move.

The signs talk now.
A rodent wants a drink . . .
It ambles past a stick.
The instinct says "Now!" and
*the stick becomes a snake
becomes a blur*
. . . but finds a death.

The signs say nothing.
The instinct says "Wait," so
the snake waits,
not like a man, not
like an Indian; like
an assassin,
a stick lying in the sand.